

# EnviroServ ruling 'is a warning'

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SNE MASUKU

DURBAN - The Durban High Court interim order suspending waste disposal at the Shongweni landfill site owned by EnviroServ should be a warning to other giant, profit-chasing companies benefiting at the expense of people's lives - that the law will catch up to them.

This was the reaction of local environmental activists following the Upper Highway Air's court victory on Tuesday.

Desmond D'Sa of the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, hailed the dedicated efforts of the various communities who came together to fight against EnviroServ.



The Upper Highway Air NGO was granted an interim interdict against EnviroServ, preventing it from disposing waste at the Shongweni landfill site. Picture: Upper Highway Air's Facebook Page

Civic body Upper Highway Air, representing the affected communities of Hillcrest, KwaNdengezi and surrounding areas, had campaigned for the complete shutdown of the dumpsite. The group made an application for an urgent court interdict to stop operations at the landfill.

On Tuesday, Judge Gregory Kruger granted an order that EnviroServ cease the acceptance, treatment and disposal of waste at its Shongweni landfill from Wednesday, pending the outcome of the company's Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) appeal to suspend its licence.

The DEA issued a notice to suspend EnviroServ's waste management licence in February, after the company's failure to comply with the terms of its licence.

D'Sa warned the owners of businesses posing health risks that they would soon be caught out.

“EnviroServ made huge profits at the expense of people living in the area. Although the community identified problems and health risks, they still deny their operations caused health risks,” he said.

Bobby Peek, of environment group groundWork, said EnviroServ knew all along that what it was doing was wrong.

“We need to know what toxic waste is being dumped. They do not want to expose these details in the public domain. This information should not be confidential,” he said.

The judge granted the interim order to allow lawyers of both sides to file supporting affidavits.

Once these were filed, an urgent court date would be set for the hearing.

### **Daily News**

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